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ABSTRACT

This publication is the result of a conference on foreign language teaching and European studies convened by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research in February 1973. In the first chapter, which serves as an introduction to the volume, G. E. Perren summarizes current views about the relationship between foreign languages and European studies. In chapter 2 P. Freeman points out that European studies should more properly be called language area studies. The third chapter is divided into two parts. E. J. Neather supports the idea that the area studies curriculum is incomplete without a language element, and P. Whittington describes European studies courses at several British schools. Nonspecialist European studies programs in the sixth form are discussed by P. Richardson in chapter 4. M. Brown writes about the Mill Hill French geography/history scheme in the fifth chapter, and German studies for the less able are recommended by A. F. Boxford in chapter 6. The seventh chapter treats the rationale behind area studies in the Schools Council Modern Language Project. T. Sirevag compares the educational role of foreign languages in Britain and Norway, and C. V. James presents six models of interrelationships between teaching languages and associated studies. Two papers prepared for but not discussed at the conference are printed as appendixes. (PMP)

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Modern Languages and European Studies

Papers from a conference convened by the
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Introduction

G. E. PERREN

For some years it has been the policy of the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research to convene conferences of specialists to discuss topics which are of current concern to language teachers — particularly those which require closer definition or clarification. These meetings do not aim to provide simple answers to complex problems; often they expose new questions and indeed may start new and profitable arguments. If thereby issues are made clearer and fresh ideas are generated, so much the better. These conferences, however stimulating to the participants, are not by themselves a very efficient method of spreading information. It is therefore usual to publish their proceedings in the form of a report containing edited versions of the papers presented, together with any useful conclusions or commentary, for wider circulation to language teachers.

The present publication arises from current interest in Britain about the relationship between foreign language teaching and European studies, background studies, area studies and so on. There is a confusion of nomenclatures and there may well be some confusion of thought among many teachers. At present the aims of foreign language teaching in schools are far from agreed; both traditional and modernist objectives are complicated by such factors as the development of primary school French, the organisation of comprehensive schools, the raising of the school leaving age and, of course, the new political relationship of Britain with Europe.

Few teachers would claim that foreign languages should be taught in schools merely as skills for their own sake, or indeed for purely vocational use. Teaching a language makes most sense when it clearly furthers some activity other than language learning — and preferably contributes to general education. For many years the aim of language teaching (ultimately) was the study of literature — literature regarded as an aspect of civilisation; hence perhaps the common idea of *civilisation* as an essential component of the language syllabus. Earlier still, in universities, modern languages were often allied to the study of history — long before they were taught in schools.

Today, however, literature alone appears too academic and is indeed regarded as inappropriate for many pupils. To be of much value its study presupposes a fairly sophisticated knowledge of the language in which it is

read — even when this is an English translation. Other factors have also intervened: for various reasons oral and aural skills are now given priority (in thought if not always in deed). But most of all, the extension of modern languages to primary schools, to non-academic streams in secondary schools, and the prospect of a higher school leaving age — not to mention the problems of teaching a wider ability range — have led to a search for new reasons and justifications for teaching foreign languages.

It can be argued that European studies, designed to further the notion of common European citizenship and extend knowledge of a common cultural heritage, provide an excellent educational objective in themselves. Proof may still be required, however, that learning a foreign language is a necessary prerequisite. Indeed, if only one foreign language is learned, this may over-concentrate attention on one country. French is not the only European language, nor is France Europe. If the aim is to learn more about Europe, a wider facility in the use of the mother tongue might even be more advantageous than a limited knowledge of French. And, one may ask, why restrict such studies to Europe? There is a lot of world outside Europe. But while many educationists would like to see the rest of the world figure more often in the curriculum, few would suggest that this is a valid reason for teaching Chinese, Hindi, Malay, Arabic or Swahili in schools.

Cruder and more direct questions can be asked. Are European studies being proposed at sixth form level as an easy substitute for more rigorous traditional literature courses? Lower down, are they a curricular excuse for the less able pupils *not* to learn conventional language skills? Have they merely been 'invented' to provide projects for CSE courses? Do not 'European' studies require an adequate contrastive base of parallel 'British' studies to give them point? (If so, we should be just as concerned with what pupils learn about their own country).

The following papers often effectively answer some of these questions: they certainly show awareness of the dangers. Mrs Freeman points out that so-called European studies, if linguistically based, should more properly be called language area studies, and that these are of limited value when confined to stereotyped platitudes about the French. Mr Neather, while noting that 'European studies are too important to be left to the linguists', nevertheless claims 'the study of people in their immediate environment is incomplete without a language element'. Mr Whittington provides specific examples of how such an approach can be interpreted in schools, when a local authority provides maximum assistance. Mrs Richardson, concerned with non-specialist sixth form work, wants European studies to produce not linguists, but well-informed European citizens (a point of view which comes in for some criticism from Mr. Sirevåg, who takes a distinctively mainland viewpoint). The Mill Hill scheme described in Mr Brown's paper shows how, with highly selected pupils, French can be put to work to teach 'real' (and examinable) geography and history, so that advanced skills in French then become a necessary condition of success in learning these subjects. German studies for the less able receive

a welcome recommendation from Mr Boxford, who points out that the school visit to Germany provides a great stimulus to learn more German among those with a very elementary linguistic achievement. Mrs Honnor describes the rationale of background information in the Schools Council courses in French, German, Spanish and Russian — where it is regarded essentially as providing incentives for language learning. The contribution from Mr Sirevag draws attention to views associated with the Council of Europe's modern languages programme and also to the essential difference in the educational role of foreign languages in Britain and Norway.

Finally the paper by Mr James presents six possible models of interrelationships between teaching languages and associated studies, which provide both a general critique and a rationalisation of many of the points raised in the previous papers.

Two papers are printed as appendices, since they were prepared for but not discussed at the conference. Dr Morley discusses a scheme for introducing several languages (rather on the lines of Mr James' 'languages of Europe' course), while Mr Hudson describes the early experiences of a new French studies course in a comprehensive school.

From discussions based on such a wide spectrum of views, it was hardly to be expected that simple conclusions would be reached. One trend however was clear. From the idea that European or area studies should support language teaching, and thus be part of the language teacher's responsibility or stock in trade, opinion shifted to seeing languages as supports to European studies, which were essentially interdisciplinary and could not be regarded merely as a 'subject' which the language teacher was automatically qualified to teach. If they were, then European studies might merely be limited to that area of knowledge acquired incidentally by language graduates and passed on to pupils who were failing to learn a language. On the other hand, if European studies were introduced in their own right (possibly on a basis of European history) at say 11+, a foreign language need not form an integral part but could probably better be taught as a separate subject and still provide support. Concern was expressed at labelling courses linked only to French as 'European'. While the difficulties of introducing a range of European languages to the generality of pupils was understood, the comparative neglect of German and Spanish in such a context was noted. And while the usefulness of Russian as a support to the study of eastern Europe was clear, it was certainly not desirable that studies referring to that area should be confined only to those who learned Russian. The content of European or area studies could certainly not be limited to what might effectively be taught through the medium of a foreign language.

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The study of French society in CSE Mode III courses

PEGGOTTY FREEMAN

A growing number of secondary schools are offering European studies to fourth-and fifth-year pupils. Where the course is examined the form is CSE Mode III. Whatever the number examined in 1974 it is likely to be doubled in 1975 and doubled again in 1976. There is a great deal of confusion about the objectives, structure and content of this new 'subject', perhaps most of all in the position within it of language learning. The pattern of growth at fourth- and fifth-year non-academic levels of the study of contemporary Europe is closely related to new courses of study which are appearing in that part of the timetable which is allocated to the language teacher.

It may help us to evaluate these courses of study and to decide on appropriate support if we understand something of how they have come into being.

The recent growth of European studies at secondary school level has taken a wide variety of forms, the easiest to identify being consciously constructed courses for the so-called 'less able' groups. Even for this level, the definition of 'Europe', the syllabus, learning and teaching methods and the role of examination vary considerably according to a number of factors, such as the subject interests of teaching staff involved, type and locality of school and even the timetable. Regrettably little serious consideration is given to the objectives for teaching about contemporary Europe apart from a general belief that it will 'broaden the horizons' of the pupils and offer them opportunities for discovery and research into questions which are relevant to their daily lives and their prospects as adult citizens in European society (whatever that may mean).

These somewhat vague objectives find an echo in language departments where, irrespective of the pressures to put European studies on the curriculum map, teachers have welcomed area studies in any shape or form as a solution to the problems created by an alarming consumer resistance to learning French. Many explanations have been offered for the fact that: 'French is rated as one of the most unpopular subjects among pupils in schools who have done it

for two years or more'.*

There are undoubtedly many causes for the present unhappy situation. It would certainly be a surprisingly complacent teacher who would claim that all was well in the language department. It is not appropriate here to examine the full implications of trying to teach a foreign language right across the ability range, but it is important to recognise that for many teachers of French, 'European studies' is seen as a solution to their problems. This may explain why so many language departments have been ready to take responsibility on behalf of the school as a whole for teaching European studies even if in their terms Europe = France or at the most, France and Germany. Historians and geographers have problems, but these are *not* such as to be solved by setting up courses in European studies and they are therefore quite happy to leave the linguists in charge while throwing some doubt on their capacity to teach French and German history and geography.

Thus it comes about that a large proportion of so-called European studies are not only language-based but also are solely concerned with particular linguistic communities and should perhaps be more properly called 'language area studies'. In practice the majority are *French* area studies. It would lead to greater clarity in the staff room if they were called such and it would thus be possible to shed the unmanageable burden of teaching about the EEC (except in so far as it relates to France and Belgium) and other genuinely European fields of study.

Pressures from inside the language department, apart from sheer dislike of learning the language, have also encouraged the development of French studies. For a long time, language teachers have felt the need to broaden the content of their syllabuses by including 'background studies'** or what is sometimes termed 'civilisation'. Side by side with this has gone the use of up-to-date texts for translation and comprehension and the teaching of grammar and vocabulary through oral and written dialogues taken from realistic situations in French everyday life. The emphasis is still on learning the language and although such teaching is 'more fun', 'more relevant to the pupils' needs' and in theory easier than the traditional academic teaching which leads via 'O' level to 'A' level and the university, it still fails to cope with the third-year syndrome. Despite heroic efforts by truly dedicated language teachers it has proved increasingly difficult to achieve any success with the less able children who, supposedly, reach a 'linguistic ceiling' by the end of the third year if not earlier. The question is posed: 'What can we do with those pupils who are not capable of doing 'O' level or even CSE language but who are still time-

*Harry Rée, 'A licence to learn languages', *Times Educational Supplement*, 8 December, 1972.

**The validity of this term is questioned by C. Vaughan James in a contribution to *Post-'O' level in modern languages* (ed. C. V. Russell, Pergamon, 1970) which asks: 'Background, one might ask, to what? A legitimate desire to escape the domination of literary set books is in danger of leading to the evolution of ramshackle alliance(s) of bits and pieces of history, geography and other traditional subjects which ... in practice, amount to little more than a sort of "general knowledge" or "current events" course ...'

tabled for French?' The answer is found in the establishment of courses in which background becomes foreground and language learning is limited to a 'survival kit'. A Mode III CSE examination is arranged so that all pupils have the chance of certification (regarded by them and their parents as all-important).

This does not provide a promising foundation for a useful course of study. So long as French studies, area studies or any mode of European studies is regarded merely as the solution to a curricular, or at worst, a disciplinary problem, it is doomed to failure. Few teachers, of course, are conscious of this curative function as the main objective of their teaching. Courses are genuinely justified by the argument that for those who are incapable of learning to speak French, a knowledge at least of the main events in French history and the location of rivers, towns and mountain ranges will be of value. Courses designed to pass on this information (which may well be all that the language teacher knows anyway) tend to be both comprehensive and superficial. Actually, there is no reason to suppose that the pupil who is bolshie about learning French grammar is any more interested in hearing about Louis XIV. In informational instruction the emphasis is on passive learning and is typified by examination questions such as the following :

'Describe France's role in World War II.'

'Write an account of the life of either Napoleon or Louis XIV.'

'Give an account of the life of De Gaulle and his role in the war.'

'Trace the history of the Common Market and explain its aims.' (Presumably this is included to make the course up-to-date.)

Intended for low levels of ability and for answers in less than 100 words, such wide-ranging questions can only test the pupil's ability to remember what the teacher said. It is extremely doubtful whether pupils are motivated to pay attention to what must inevitably be rapid summary of dates, dogmatic statements and value judgements, e.g. 'De Gaulle led the people of France in a great resistance movement against the Nazis'. Teaching about 'the way of life' is even more susceptible to value judgements and inaccurate generalisations : 'French people shake hands with their friends on every possible occasion'. 'The French breakfast consists of croissants and coffee which is drunk from a bowl' etc.

Not all courses are as described above. In many, the emphasis is on active learning in which the pupils are encouraged to find out about those aspects of French society which most interest them, to draw their own conclusions and to make judgements which may well differ from those of the teacher or the textbooks which they use. The general picture, however, reveals confusion, lack of clarity about objectives and over-hasty establishment of courses which tend towards superficiality, reinforcement of stereotyped views about foreigners and a selection of activities which will keep the children quiet.

It is neither desirable nor possible to prepare a single, ideal course of French studies. The great merit of the CSE Mode III system is that it en-

courages the initiative and enthusiasm of teacher-innovators who are conscious of their freedom to develop project work, exchange visits, new methods of audio-visual instruction, role playing and group study and can relate their teaching to local conditions and resources. Flexibility in forms of assessment makes easier the task of teaching across the ability range while fresh interest among the pupils begins to make teaching a pleasure. On the other hand, the difficulties of teaching without course books and without the framework provided by an external examination syllabus are very great. Starting without any clear idea of purpose; isolated from the experience of others or the pedagogical theory provided by curriculum development projects initiated at national level; struggling with the very real difficulties such as the inheritance of an unruly class; shortage of time for materials preparation and resource collection; the responsibility of designing and marking an examination — the individual teacher or group of teachers may easily become discouraged.

At a national level, attempts to produce detailed syllabuses or textbook courses of study would conflict with the independent initiatives at local level. What then is the nature of support which *could* be given? It is, I suggest, for language teachers and educational researchers to discuss the whole question of objectives for language area studies, to submit any conclusions for critical examination by teachers in schools and professional associations and above all to participate actively in the groups and working parties organised by many LEA's.

Before reaching definite conclusions about French studies being for less able pupils, a number of questions have to be answered :

1. What are the main objectives for a many-sided study of French society?
2. What should be the content of such a study?
3. How can the teaching implied in area studies be integrated with existing language learning? Should it come before, parallel with or after language study?
4. What should the relationship be with other subject teaching?
5. What is the contribution of foreign exchange and travel?
6. What resources are valid for area studies? To what extent can existing textbooks and audio-visual courses be used? Should teaching be in French or English or both?
7. Should French studies be examined? If so, do existing examinations provide sufficient options or is it necessary to find new ways of examining?
8. What are the main difficulties in the way of introducing French area studies into the curriculum?

These questions are not restricted to the question of French studies for poor linguists. Once it is accepted that the study of historical, political, geographical, economic, social and cultural aspects of a foreign society can be justified irrespective of the needs of the less able, it should be possible to find ways of making such forms of study available to all levels of ability. The study of the language and its use in understanding the foreign society will play a greater or lesser part in the course in different situations. It may be that for some pupils no other language course will be offered. For others one could envisage a CSE Mode III course in French studies as complementary to 'O' level in French language. Certainly until such time as changes in the 'O' and 'A' level syllabuses cater for the integrated study of foreign linguistic communities in Europe, CSE Mode III will continue to provide a usefully flexible structure for such studies.

The question of whether the study of one country is or isn't European studies will be argued for a long time. Possibly the best way of looking at it here is to say that the depth study of one foreign country (or linguistic community) can make a particular contribution to the study of Europe as a whole. It is assisted by the language which both facilitates the study and enables pupils to get an inside view which cannot be obtained in any other way. It is thus a part of the study of Europe but not an alternative.

As I see it, taking language study and area studies together the general aim of French studies for any age or any level of ability is to provide the context within which a pupil may develop his understanding of a particular foreign society. The pupil will be motivated to carry out his studies of this society by interests which range from utilitarian to academic by way of social and entertainment. It is the task of the teacher to use all the resources at his disposal to enable the pupil to carry out these studies. By resources I mean his own experience, knowledge and skills, those of colleagues in other disciplines, audio-visual hardware and software, book and non-book materials and anything which can come from contacts abroad and outside the school at home. The teacher must have a clear understanding of *why* he is providing this context for study. He can then decide what role will be played by language learning.

At some levels the so-called linguistic element will be fully integrated into the French studies course and will to a greater or lesser extent assist the pupil in carrying out his studies. At other levels the self-conscious study of the language may be carried out as a complementary study apart from its use within the integrated course. The two linguistic studies are not the same and although exposure to written and spoken language will greatly enrich the pupil's grasp both of the language itself and the view of France from the inside, correction of grammar and spelling will tend to inhibit motivation for learning about French society. If you are asking the way to the station or discussing developments in French political life, you do not expect your errors to be corrected. If a pupil is reporting his findings to the class and chooses to do so in French because this is the medium of instruction, his flow of thought should not be interrupted by overt comment on the way he formulates his statement.

This brings me to the question of the label 'less able'. There is a tendency to categorise pupils according to academic criteria which do not relate to the real objectives for French studies. If courses are concerned with topics such as cheese making, urbanisation problems, sport or the cinema it is not because the pupils can't cope with learning the language. It is because these topics have relevance to their interests and aspirations. The fact that this study is carried out in English has nothing to do with their abilities to study these topics. They may in fact do a better job of it than pupils who concentrate on language learning in order to study literature in the original language. We should also not prejudge the linguistic capacities of pupils who have not before seen the relevance of the foreign language to their studies. Neither should we make hasty judgements about who are worth teaching as the future technicians, economists and executives in Europe. We don't know where these people will be drawn from but we do know that in the future everyone will have more contact with French people than in the past and whatever their capabilities they have the right to expect opportunities to learn about these people.

Language pervades the whole study whether it can be assessed or not. It is thus a mistake to separate language from the rest of the syllabus by allocating a specific percentage of marks to the 'language component'.

It is unfortunate that CSE has acquired the reputation of being lower in status than GCE and is therefore offered in the main to those who are not presented for the more academic examination. I hope that we can reach a situation where French studies courses are offered because they fulfil certain objectives and that if examined at all, the certificate is regarded only as an indication that the course has been followed. I can think of schools where European studies are offered as a genuine fourth year option for all pupils and where no one suggests that they are an expendable frill for 'O' level pupils. There is no real reason why suitable courses of French studies should not be offered in the sixth form, with or without examination.

A further point needs to be made about 'integration'. There is some disagreement about the question of language teachers taking responsibility for history and geography simply because they know or think they know more about France than any other department. Whatever we may feel about this, I do not think that the only solution lies in team or multi-discipline teaching. The integrative factor in area studies can be seen in the learning process as well as in teaching. The pupil applies skills developed in history, geography, language and other disciplines to the study of a physical, social or thematic area. The language teacher will provide him with the structure for learning, the resources and guidance in applying language skills. He must avoid using his authority as a French specialist in carrying out instruction which enters fields beyond his competence. He has to accept that his pupils may be better geographers or historians than he is. This is acceptable when a girl cooks a French dish or a boy explains the workings of a French car but it is not so easy in the academic disciplines. Perhaps the point can be understood by

quoting from a geographer at Lewes Priory School :

> 'As I see it you (the French teacher) will not be teaching the geography of France but your pupils will be developing a geographical understanding of France. You will be able to help them with your French geography textbooks. I can help you by looking at those books and advising on which parts fit in with what they have already learnt with me.'

— 3 —

European studies: the Somerset syllabus

1. Basic principles

E. J. NEATHER

The teaching of European studies in schools is not new. Studies of Europe within the framework of separate subject disciplines have long been an established element in the school programme. Background material concerned with life in contemporary France or Germany or Spain has often formed part of the most enlightened language teaching. Even the idea of an area studies approach to the study of Europe, with the aim of integrating language work and other subjects is not new, and finds its most significant development in the Oxfordshire syllabus.* The Oxfordshire scheme remains a model for others, not only in much of its approach to teaching and learning, but in the thoroughness with which the scheme was worked out in terms of foreign links, teacher training schemes and encouragement to schools. It must be said that, however much interest other attempts, such as the Somerset syllabus** have raised in the last year or so, they have not yet the same practical achievements to show.

I wish to stress the comprehensive nature of the Oxfordshire approach to European studies, and also the thinking that lay behind the Somerset scheme, as I am concerned that the validity of this area of study may be diluted by the tendency to seize upon European studies as the new idea in vogue. Modern language teaching, perhaps because of a certain defensiveness in its practitioners, seems prone to jump at the latest trend, rather on the principle of any port in a storm. European studies can be portrayed as all things to all men. It is the convenient term for referring to the studies pursued by those pupils with 'French' on the timetable, but whose teachers had long since given up any idea of persevering with the teaching of a foreign language. It can be a highly structured programme of economics, geography and history to an academic sixth form. European studies can mean cutting out pictures of Renault cars, drawing maps of canal systems or following the development of Renaissance art. European studies expand or contract to fill the available frontiers in the timetable rather as the frontiers of Europe itself become flexible as soon as you try to define where they are.

*Oxfordshire Education Committee: *European studies: a source for an integrated studies syllabus*. Oxford, 1970.

**Somerset Education Committee: *An integrated course in European studies* (syllabus). Taunton, 1971.

Such flexibility is both potential weakness and potential source of strength. For if we can avoid some of the obvious dangers of a thin layer of background information, the capacity of schools to adapt European studies to their own staffing strengths and to the needs of pupils at different levels of ability and progress is one of the attractions of the subject. It was felt by the members of the Somerset working party that if one could be clear about first principles, these could find application in a number of ways, and at a number of levels. I want to try to pin down some of these principles as I understand them. To do so I shall make an initial assumption that I am talking about pupils in their fourth and fifth year of secondary school study; probably located somewhere in a middle band of ability, possibly aiming for a CSE in European studies.

As the first article of faith may I say that a language is an essential element of the European studies course. That may seem an irrational assertion when faced with the contrary statement made by others that European studies is perfectly feasible without a language. I am concerned that European studies should not be pursued with the detachment it is possible to bring to an examination of farming in the Paris basin or the campaigns of Napoleon. I shall be referring shortly to the value of the foreign visit, and the language work is closely bound up with that visit. Basically it should be stated that an essential part of the course must be understanding of our nearest neighbours and growing sympathy with them; that such understanding will be aimed at through studies of family life and ways of living; and that a study of people in their immediate environment is incomplete without a language element.

In the context of European studies it is not possible either to visit all the countries being studied or learn even a smattering of all the languages. I have already seen one misbegotten course which attempted to teach a bit of four languages. This is to miss the point of the language element in European studies as I have outlined it.

Which language is studied is not important. Significant is that it should be the language of the country to be visited. Significant also is the teaching method. In this respect, the Somerset party was lucky to have the services of B. C. King who wrote a course eminently suitable to the ability range of which we are talking, and also susceptible of close integration with the elements of the course dealing with domestic life and daily needs during a visit. The course was designed to develop the receptive skills above all, seeing as its first aim the need for the pupil to grasp what was going on around him, rather than to struggle painfully to produce a minimal number of correct sentences. Secondly the course aimed to lead the pupil to express basic requirements orally, and to master certain elements of the small change of daily chat — being enthusiastic, polite. Thirdly the course provided background information of a linguistic nature essential to the understanding of a foreign country e.g. road signs, menus etc. In its use of topic work for this latter aim, the language course had a methodological link with other items of the course.

There may be an element of paradox in studying perhaps six countries but only one language. If so this must be admitted, but the values of this type

of language work as part of the core of study should not be discarded. To learn *about* the variety of languages in Europe may well be a valuable topic elsewhere in the course, but this should not be confused with the need to approach one culture through its language.

I said earlier that the language should be linked to the foreign visit. I wish to assert the need for this visit as the second article of faith. Much of my own initial enthusiasm for launching out on a syllabus of European studies came from observing the gathering tide of school children visiting the Continent on schemes sponsored by the Somerset LEA and others. Whether the visits take the form of individual exchanges or class visits to county centres, they should be an accepted part of the European studies course, with topic work carrying over from class to visit and back to class. Not only does the year's language work come into its own on such a visit, but aspects of local geography and history which have formed the basis of class projects can now be turned into practical field work. The foreign visit provides the opportunity for an all-round look at a culture, and should involve more members of staff than just the linguists. Some of the best examples of such a total look at a foreign culture have been provided by primary schools. I think particularly of one school in Somerset and the detailed preparation made for the visit by the children: the map work, historical preparation, learning of techniques for an urban traverse etc. The programme on the spot involves study in depth of one small town, and the re-assembling of that town back in the classroom in the form of a completed traverse, creative writing, paintings, mathematical studies of traffic flow etc. It is in helping the individual child to participate in such a visit that some of the authorities' money can best be spent.

I said earlier that the foreign visit should not be left only to the linguists. I shall now state as my third article of faith that European studies as a whole are too important to leave to the linguists. The average linguist such as myself has cobbled together bits of geography, history and has the whole cultural baggage suffused with the rosy glow of his love for the French or Germans or whoever. Such infectious enthusiasms must not be mistaken for a thorough-going knowledge of the geography and history of Europe, and are certainly not to be confused with an ability to teach such subjects.

I have shown that the linguist has a great deal to contribute. When it comes to the issues of European studies where the knowledge and expertise of other members of staff are indispensable, the linguist must work as one of a team and not clutch the whole of Europe jealously to his bosom. European studies lend themselves to treatment which transcends traditional subject barriers, and are ideal ground for team teaching.

European studies are also ideal ground, and this brings me to my fourth principle, for pupil-based learning. This is why such a large part of the Somerset syllabus was devoted to topic work. It is important in the choice of topics for study, both that they should be intra-European in character rather than national, and also that resource materials are readily available which are accessible to pupils studying by personal research. The choice of topics should

be governed, apart from these considerations, by the need to develop a sympathetic attitude towards European societies. It might be the case that pupils' awareness of their own environment is critical, and that topics would suggest a contrastive approach, part of an exercise in 'seeing ourselves as others see us'.

So the Somerset syllabus aimed to present a backcloth of Europe; to bring Europe up to date for pupils; to introduce the dominant themes by means of sample studies of selected nations; to provide a range of topics which would allow pupils to follow up particular interests and enthusiasms in depth; and to attempt a more completed rounded view of one society by studying its language and visiting the country. I hope it is now clearer what I meant by saying that the breadth and flexibility of European studies was their great strength, as long as certain principles were adhered to. I hope it will also be evident how such principles might be applied to European studies in the sixth form, or to the less able pupils. I have no time to develop here these further applications, nor the resources problem, nor the need for seeing the teaching about Europe as a continuum from primary school to sixth form. Leaving these and other important themes to one side is not to imply that I disregard them, but that they are not immediately relevant to the subject of this paper which set out to reassert some basic principles which I see as underlying a truly integrated and educational approach to European studies.

II. Applications

P. WHITTINGTON

It is now three years since the European studies working party in Somerset was set up, and this is an attempt to show the position at present. It is impossible in the space available to describe the progress made by all schools following the Somerset course in European studies; this paper is therefore limited to findings in but a few.

At Gordano School, a large comprehensive school, the CSE Mode III European studies course is being used with a sixth form group of about twenty, who had previously shown little linguistic ability. The whole course is being taught by the language department at the moment but from September 1973, when European studies will be introduced in the fourth form as a CSE Mode II course, the teaching will be shared between the language department and a newly formed humanities department. It must be emphasised that the study of a European language here does not attempt to produce linguistic excellence. The aim is to link this course both to the wider aspects of the proposed syllabus, that is to say, an understanding of the French or German ways of life and the visit abroad. Results so far with sixth formers have been encouraging. Confidence in expressing themselves in the foreign language — French or German is offered — has grown, and with this a genuine desire to know more about Europe. One doubt expressed about the course is that it demands more teaching time than the average school may be prepared to give. It is hoped that the

South Western CSE Board will agree to give two separate grades to all candidates following the syllabus.

At Minehead School, the upper comprehensive school for West Somerset where the CSE Mode III examination is in its second year, the target pupils are 14- and 15-year-olds who are studying mainly for the CSE. Does it make sense to study a European language without making it immediately relevant as an aid to understanding? Does it make sense to study the geography of Europe without studying aspects of its history and its social, economic and artistic culture? These are questions put forward by Mr Roger Clay, the European studies course co-ordinator at the school. So far at Minehead over 100 pupils have followed an integrated European studies course. There have been eight teachers contributing, including three linguists. French only was taught at first, but in September 1972 German was introduced as an optional alternative. The visit to France proved to be the highlight of the first year's operations for the European studies class. The pupils stayed for one week in a *colonie de vacances*. They were encouraged to visit the neighbouring small town independently of their teachers and, in addition to specific activities such as a study tour of Caen and a study of the local area using large-scale maps and established fieldwork techniques, each child had the opportunity of spending a weekend with a French family.

The Minehead pupils returned overwhelmed by the hospitality they had met and glowing with enthusiasm. The breakthrough had been made, the success of the visit and consequently of the course was assured. Motivation was heightened and feelings for France and the French enhanced. 'The freeing of pupils to pursue their own interests has stimulated far more commitment to learning amongst a group of pupils whose attitudes and aspirations have not been reflected in preceeding years of formal learning of what has been to them, all too frequently, a series of irrelevant subjects. This is not a blueprint for complete freedom of choice of studies. It is a blueprint for increased pupil participation within a framework of learning which has clearly defined objectives.' These words clearly sum up the opinion of the teachers involved in the Somerset Mode III CSE European studies course.

One of the results of the Somerset working party was to create a standing committee to investigate the application of European studies to 'the needs of younger secondary school pupils, non-examination pupils and sixth formers . . .' In April 1972 this standing committee met for the first time with a view to producing a syllabus to be used in the sixth form. Such a course of study was envisaged as leading to the GCE 'A' level examination. Its structure lends itself however to modification for use as a one- or two-year syllabus for 'O' level or for non-examination students.

It was agreed at the outset to adopt a framework of three parts including the study of one European language. It was agreed also that in the language element there should be two main aims. The language should first of all aid the pupil during a foreign visit, i.e. the skills to understand and to respond are demanded. Secondly, the language should serve as a tool during the European

studies course, largely by providing an understanding of written material. The working party also agreed that the language chosen should not be one which is also being studied at 'A' level.

At the working party's fifth meeting in June 1972 it was agreed to rethink the whole structure of the course with the following criteria in mind:

(a) What should a European educated to sixth form level have learned and appreciated about Europe?
(b) The course (like the CSE course) must be fully integrated.
(c) Methods of teaching the course and examining it should be relegated to the background for the present so that an 'ideal' course could be put forward.
(d) The course should be intellectually demanding and rewarding for all concerned.

By July the working party had agreed on the following syllabus:

1. The study of one European language.
2. The study of ten topics taken from a range of five sections.
3. The submission of a dissertation on one topic already listed *or* an aspect of a visit to one or more countries in Europe.

Experts from schools within the county were approached to indicate the fields to be covered by each topic and to submit a reading list and references to note-book materials. These reports are now complete. The aim of the working party, it was now decided, was to publish a paper for further discussion preferably on a national level. This would contain a draft syllabus and a justification of it on educational grounds.

For one week a team of teachers led by the Director of the Somerset Language Centre met to discuss aims and content of the language element, and began producing French, German and Spanish courses. It was agreed that in the foreign language of their choice students should reach an acceptable standard in the following skills:

(i) The comprehension of a piece of spoken language
(ii) The comprehension of a written passage
(iii) The ability to converse with a third party on:
  (a) any four topics already studied
  (b) any two selected modern texts,

and in English:

(iv) The ability to write an interpretation of data concerning one of the topics already listed. These data will be presented in a combination of written, aural and visual modes.

The aims of the CSE European studies course as set out in the syllabus *An integrated course in European studies* are applicable here. The expectations in terms of academic achievement are obviously much higher. In

particular the working party have continued to stress the value of crossing traditional subject barriers in order to achieve an integrated course. Emphasis is once more as in the CSE syllabus placed on course work rather than on formal, written examinations. The Somerset sixth form course advocates the investigation of a series of topics and their presentation for assessment *during* rather than at the end of the course of study.

The greatest single problem facing the teacher of European studies seems to be one of resources. He himself in the first instance must construct his own resources. To some extent however the LEA can help. In Somerset, work has begun in developing the Language Centre as a place for storing and distributing European studies resources material. In co-operation with the wardens of the Somerset teachers' centres, the Authority is aiming to produce kits of resources for use with the optional course work topics. It is also planned to begin producing multi-media packs of material for use on a topic basis in the middle school. It must be stated however that we have no desire at the moment to produce a definite European studies course for the middle school.

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Non-specialist European studies in the sixth form

PATRICIA RICHARDSON

All non-specialist courses in the sixth form are faced with two fundamental problems: a problem of incentive and one of the delimitation of the subject-matter. In this paper, I would like first of all to consider these problems, then to describe the manner in which, in my own school, we have attempted in European studies to use each one as a means towards solving the other, and finally to report on new developments in sixth form European studies as they are being envisaged and worked on at the moment in Somerset — a county in which the LEA has committed itself financially on quite a generous scale to the development of European studies in its schools.

The problem of incentive exists in all non-specialist courses in the upper school because they are almost always non-examinable and they are always without any qualification aim. Consequently, a course of this kind must contain in itself a justification for its own existence which is obvious enough for every student to be able to see what it is. Otherwise, the drop-out rate, whether of physically dropping out or of mentally opting out while physical presence is maintained, can become phenomenal. Nowadays, to present the intellectual worth of any pursuit as a valid justification for its existence does not appear to be an acceptable argument to sixth form students. In a comprehensive school, in particular, where the ability range in the sixth form is likely to stretch from Oxbridge and 'S' level to CSE re-takes, such a suggestion would probably be received with scorn. Even the Oxbridge candidate is likely to reply: 'That's all very well for me — after all, it could be useful in the general paper — but what about everybody else? What use is it to the others?' For, underlying any acceptance of validity, and of paramount importance to the problem of incentive, is the practical use which the individual student can visualise for the course.

It is not possible either to put forward arguments about future benefits — widened horizons, greater and deeper understandings, a grasp of the relationships between different aspects of knowledge ..., because for the most part, for the majority of students, the 'future' means the forthcoming examinations at whatever level and the immediate door that is going to be

opened by their results; and the only grasp of intellectual relationships that students readily accept as necessary, is the one that will enable them to answer this or that specific question in a specified subject examination. For students, at this stage, are career-orientated as well as utilitarian in their outlook. Even the traditional 'idealism of youth' has taken on a utilitarian form and become either a desire to effect social good in a practical and active way, or, for the small minority, a total action in the form of a complete opting out from society. The 'widened horizons' of purely cultural arguments have no obvious practical application and therefore are not acceptable. A non-examinable course must therefore offer a useful and practical subject matter if it is to be given a chance to be successful.

But where can that content be found? There is a sense in which anything at all, studied by European students in Europe, forms a part of European studies. One cannot honestly speak of a geographical limit to the subject. The European concept of China is as much about Europe as about China, and European industry, finance, music, ways of life etc., spill over into and receive from America, Asia, Africa. One cannot turn either to the requirements of society at large for help. 'Society at large' for a sixth former is the environment into which he is going to step once examinations are dealt with, namely, a career; no career, as yet, depends upon a certain type of knowledge about Europe. Obviously, British entry into the European Community suggests that something ought to be known about the other members and the institutions — but *what* about them? Once again, one comes up against the universality for Europeans of the concept of European. The only satisfactory course of action in seeking to delimit the subject matter of European studies which I have found, has been to return to the sixth formers themselves, and adopt their practical manner of approach. The real problems facing anyone who wants to invent a European studies course are the practical ones : how to capture the interest of the students who are career-orientated and conscious of the increasing speed with which time appears to go by, and how to keep their interest sufficiently for them to want to go on working at it for two years. The content, whatever it may turn out to be, must be of intrinsic interest to a fairly large majority — for the pressures of group norms at that age are strong — and the method of studying the content must be such that the student can feel the benefit of it while working at it.

In my own school, when the team of staff, consisting of two language specialists, one geography specialist, one music teacher, one RE specialist and one cookery specialist, came to that conclusion, we were able to discover and define what the first aims of our European studies course should be :

1. to extend in a European direction studies undertaken in other fields, whether related to academic interests or not;

2. to enlarge the scope of background reading in connection with 'A' level studies, making it more profitable by guidance and individual discussion and less confined to specialist areas.

We decided, in fact, to invent no course at all, but to allow the interests of each student to dictate the subject matter which that student would pursue. We would, in one way or another, ask each student: 'What will you accept as a good incentive to work?' with the intention of using the answer as the subject matter of the course.

These aims have imposed their own organisation on the work. Since the course is based on individuals, the students have been divided into groups and each group has been allocated to one European studies tutor. Each tutor sees each individual student once a fortnight, to discuss subject matter, decide on a topic, discover ways of exploring that topic, suggest source materials, assess work already done, discuss possible directions in which the work can be extended. Since the interviews are individual, source materials and the amount and level of work expected can be geared to the ability and commitments of each student. A brief record of interviews is kept by each tutor so that a record of work exists which can be passed on to other tutors or to other students, if it will be useful to them. The method of work, too, can be geared to the individual, but it has to be a research method because the tutor is often dealing with a subject about which he or she knows very little. This can be uncomfortable until the student himself completely accepts a situation in which roles are reversed, but we have not found it an unhealthy situation. On the contrary, quite often, pupil participation has increased in proportion to teacher ignorance, so long as the teacher assumes a genuine interest in what the pupil has to teach him. The main skills which the teachers have brought to the 'course' (if the word can be used) is a skill in asking profitable questions and the skill of recognising to which discipline various problems belong and which specialist to turn towards for help.

On the whole, pupil reaction to the system has been satisfactory. There has been no question of wasting time, because of the connections with examination studies. The phrase 'You must do more background reading' has acquired a greater and more satisfying meaning. Some students have remarked on the increased value which discussion can give reading, and the need sometimes to explain the content of a work to a teacher who has not read it has led to a very different manner of reading. A few students have realised how important it is to ask the right kind of questions about information, facts or opinions, and on many occasions we have heard the comment: 'I never realised before how many connections there are between different things'. The amount of work done has varied considerably. A face-to-face interview with a teacher once a fortnight is quite a powerful incentive for some. Others (the minority, fortunately) have discovered considerable ingenuity and fluency in covering up a lack of real work.

Although this system of study is not a course in the conventional sense, the teachers involved in it have not regretted the lack of a cohesive common subject matter, mainly because the incentive problem of the non-examinable course has not arisen and also because it has been possible to gear not only subject matter, method and amount of work to the individual student, but also

teacher expectations and consequently, the sense of job satisfaction. On the whole, the staff involved in the course are satisfied.

Nevertheless, there always comes a moment, particularly when examinations are approaching, when maturing students realise that time is really their own and that they can choose and are responsible for the manner in which they spend it. I believe, in fact, that the discovery/participation method of work inside the European studies system helps to develop this mature outlook. Then, often with regret because of newly discovered interests, students concentrate on their career, giving examination subjects precedence over any other form of work. 'It's a pity one can't work like this for exams' has been said by some.

It is a pity, too, that those who have achieved a good result in a Mode III CSE in European studies and are capable of going further, should have no possibility of a higher qualification in the subject. For these two reasons, a working party has been set up in Somerset to work out an 'A' level syllabus in European studies, which will be presented to the examination boards at the end of this year. Obviously, an 'A' level syllabus must be very different from the free-searching-for-interest which the non-examinable course allows. It must have a clearly defined subject matter of considerable academic worth. It must satisfy clearly defined educational aims in content, method and assessment, acceptable to the university departments with which it would be connected. The members of the working party, however, are convinced that the discovery/participation method of study is one of the most fruitful ever devised for students at this stage, and that it is important to preserve the opportunity for a wide choice of topics even within an examination syllabus, so that students may explore areas in which they are genuinely interested. We have therefore tried to satisfy all these demands.

We suggest the following three aims for the syllabus:

1. To provide a linguistic background which will enable students to seek the information they require;
2. To provide the general background of information and understanding necessary for an intelligent European citizen who is going to travel in Europe for either business or pleasure;
3. To provide an opportunity for discovery/participation methods of learning to be effective at an advanced academic level for examination purposes.

The syllabus itself, we suggest, should consist of three parts:

1. The study of one European language;
2. The study of ten topics selected from five sections, each containing a choice of subjects, grouped under the following general headings:
   (a) Population and resources
   (b) The individual and society
   (c) Thought and communications
   (d) Commerce and technology
   (e) Cultural aspects.

3. The submission of a dissertation on one topic or on an extended (at least one week) visit to a country in Europe.

In the details of the syllabus, we have tried to combine and balance a certain breadth of coverage with the possibility for treatment in depth and we intend to ask that some form of continuous assessment be seriously considered.

One of the most controversial aspects of the syllabus is connected with the first part: the study of one European language. Oral language is a means of two-way communication between individuals in which two very distinct activities are going on: understanding and assimilation on the one hand and expression on the other. These activities are different in kind. In reading, only the first of these activities is involved, and in asking for information, it is mainly the second activity which is necessary. One asks a question which is not intended as self-expression but as a stimulus that will provoke a reaction supplying the information required. Language examinations traditionally test both aspects of language, and, since it is the ability for self-expression which distinguishes the linguist from the non-linguist, the emphasis in language examinations tends to be on essay-writing, prose translation or comprehension tests in which the answers are in the foreign language. But a European studies course is not aiming at producing linguists, but well-informed European citizens. It seems sensible therefore to suggest that the language element should be geared towards developing as fas as possible the comprehension ability of students, demanding from the point of view of the use of the language only a fairly simple ability to converse orally on some prepared topic. Suggestions therefore are being made that include an intensive listening course with a certain amount of oral paraphrase work in the foreign language and an intensive reading course in which all the follow-up work will be done in English. Textbooks are being produced which will serve not only as language element, but also as source material for the general topics. In this way, the language element becomes truly integrated into the whole course.

It is in this kind of flexible, useful, student-orientated 'A' level course that the future lies, I believe. Non-examination courses to broaden horizons are, in a sense, admissions that the present system is unsuitable for modern society. The incentive problems which they create demonstrate how far removed they are from the accepted conscious needs of the students whose horizons they hope to broaden. Schools no longer belong to a self-contained, self-perpetuating academic world, but to society as a whole. The pupils know this, and that is why they are career-orientated. We must therefore search for a flexibility inside courses that will satisfy the requirements of a wide ability range among students and a wide qualification-producing range in the end-products, if we are to be educating the majority of our pupils for the majority of our time. The 'A' level syllabus in European studies which the Somerset working party is producing will, I believe, satisfy these requirements, and will, we hope, stimulate the examination boards into considering the kind of questions that we have had to ask in order to produce it.

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*The Mill Hill French geography/history scheme**

M. W. F. BROWN

The philosophy behind this scheme is that we must get away in Great Britain from the situation in which a minority of people are regarded as linguists, assumed to be endowed with a gift which they develop as a specialist line, whilst the majority accepts with admiration or indifference that the mastery of a language is not only beyond them but is irrelevant to their life and work. A language is a means of communication; it follows then that it should be taken for granted as a tool of secondary importance to that which has to be communicated. The traditional methods of teaching languages tend to emphasise language learning as an end in itself, producing a situation in this country in which it can, without too much exaggeration, be said that our linguists are people who know how to speak a foreign language without having anything particular they need to say in it. This also explain why in language learning in this country motivation is so weak. The Dutchman or the Dane learns English not because it occupies a traditional place in the school curriculum but because he wants to sell things to Englishmen and thereby earn his living. Clearly the English cannot overcome entirely the disadvantage, or as many would prefer to say, the advantage of speaking the world's most widely used language, but we feel that a change of emphasis is both possible and salutary. Our approach to what we are trying to do is therefore deliberately ambiguous. On the one hand, the pupils obviously benefit substantially in terms of fluency, and comprehension and vocabulary through studying subjects through the medium of French. We want this to happen. Yet at the same time we must insist that this gain is of secondary importance. Our scheme fails if we are not successfully teaching history and geography; it fails if we are merely filching some extra French lessons at the expense of our colleagues. French must cease in this context to be a 'subject' in its own right; it must merely be taken for granted. The temptation must be resisted to expound French grammar, or indeed to correct mistakes in French unless they hinder understanding. The yardstick we have adopted is that mistakes in language will be

*Brown, Michael: 'Experiment at Mill Hill'. *Times Educational Supplement*, 2 March 1973, Modern Languages Extra, p.VII.

corrected only to the same extent which they would be corrected were the lesson being conducted in the pupils' mother tongue. Substantial self-control is sometimes needed in order not to violate too drastically this principle, particularly when marking written work.

During the course of their first year at Mill Hill, a group of twenty boys aged 13 are chosen for the scheme on the basis of their all-round academic ability. In addition to being prepared in class for a two-year course to 'O' level, they are given regular oral coaching in small groups by a native French speaker. Later they spend three to four weeks on an exchange with a secondary school in Rouen, the Institution Join-Lambert, where they are able to participate fully in all aspects of French school and family life.

By the beginning of their second year at Mill Hill they are sufficiently competent to spend two 45-minute periods a week (supplementary to their normal French periods) on a one-year French geography course which is taught entirely in French and with the emphasis firmly on the geographic content. That we are teaching the subject in a foreign language and that the boys are thereby improving their linguistic knowledge is, as it were, incidental. The course is based to some extent on the syllabus for the *Troisième* in French schools and we use the *Manuel* published by Bordas in the 'Nouvelle Collection Maurice Le Lannou' together with the corresponding *Cahier de travaux pratiques* (an excellent printed workbook involving pupil completion of maps and graphs, indentification and description of photographs etc.) and a set of useful *croquis*, outline maps published by Nathan. In addition, a selection of atlases and books are available for general reference.

The first half of the course is basically physical, an introductory geological history of France, studies in climate and vegetation, characteristics of mountains, basins, rivers, coastal features. Normally new material is presented and discussed first in class (an overhead projector is invaluable, supported by large-scale maps, pictures and colour slides). When it has been digested orally, the boys make their own notes and carry out follow-up research in a workbook. The boys react enthusiastically to the novel nature of the subject, accepting as quite natural an entirely French approach. They cope remarkably well, too, with the technical vocabulary which has inevitably to be learnt in the early stages of the course. Difficulties like *un fossé d'effondrement*, *le régime d'un fleuve* or *le névé* are soon overcome. Interestingly, once a concept has been well understood, the boys rarely attempt to discover its English equivalent.

The second half of the course concentrates more on human and economic geography (urban, agricultural and industrial surveys) and is directly related to the Rouen exchange which occurs at this time. At Rouen, as well as taking part in the normal geography lessons, the boys spend four days, assisted by kind French colleagues, on a field study of Rouen with particular reference to the town's industry and its reliance on the Seine as a means of transport. Armed with guidesheets and questionnaires, the boys visit a local factory and the ports of Rouen and Le Havre. They also go out on expeditions along the Seine valley, to the locks at Amfreville-sur-les-Monts and to the suspension-

bridge at Tancarville. It is hoped that experiences gained from such a field study will emphasise the practical value and relevance of what has been learnt in the classroom.

For the future, it would be gratifying to see an expansion of the scheme to include greater numbers of participants, precluded at present on practical, administrative grounds, and a field study conducted in an area contrasting with Rouen, for example in the *Massif Central* or the Alps.

In their third year the boys are sitting for the bulk of their GCE 'O' level examinations, including history. By arrangement with the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board the boys will take in English the normal paper on 20th Century Europe. They are preparing 19th Century Europe through the medium of French. We are using the *Histoire en 3*" published by Nathan. This particular edition was chosen because the accompanying *Cahier de travaux pratiques* is thought to be particularly well done and appropriate to our purposes. The sheets are used as test papers worked by the candidates at regular intervals; the marks will be submitted to the examiners and, subject to monitoring, will count towards the total marks for the examination. Other regular test marks awarded throughout the year will also be accepted by the examiners up to 50% of the total marks. Balance will be awarded on a formal question paper to be set by the examiners on the basis of the syllabus. The French element as a whole will represent approximately 50% of the total 'O' level history marks. Eight chapters of the book are being prepared, covering France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Russia and Great Britain. Two periods a week are available for this work. It is a pity that one more cannot at the moment be found.

It can be confidently asserted that comprehension as such as far as the language is concerned has ceased to be a problem. The use of French is taken entirely for granted and no one is tempted to lapse into English even in moments of stress. Enthusiasm is enormous, partly thanks to a sense of participating in something unusual. Written work is inevitably a problem. It is unrealistic to expect the class in the time available to produce full scale French essays on historical questions. Short answers on the lines demanded in the *Cahier de travaux pratiques* are all that is being looked for in terms of the examination.

In their French lessons all these boys, having passed 'O' level the previous year, are preparing for a French 'A' level in two years' time. Those who choose to study French as a main subject will join the regular French 'A' level group in the sixth form. The others will, whatever their chosen three subjects are, sit the French 'A' level of the Associated Examining Board after one year in the sixth form. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that it is no part of our intention that more boys than normal should choose French as a main subject as a result of having participated in this scheme. Paradoxically it would be contrary to the spirit of what we are attempting were this to be the case.

Certain challenging questions obviously present themselves. Geography and history are being taught by teachers of French whose professional qualifications for the work are incidental to their command of French. This appears to be at this moment inevitable and one can only repeat, *a fortiori*, what is said in the opening paragraph. The day ought to come when a British teacher at secondary level is capable of teaching his subject in a foreign language as and when it seems appropriate. Perhaps one or two of our pupils may one day be among the first to do this! It may well prove possible in the near future for a teacher who has read for one of the newer combined degrees, French/History, French/Geography, to do this work with the confidence of one who is professionally qualified in both camps. These conditions already prevail in Germany, for example. The obvious possibility also presents itself of having this work done by native French speakers. It was thought at Mill Hill that, at any rate in the inception, the scheme could be more securely launched by teachers who are fully sensitive to the more intangible difficulties and implications of the experiment within the context of the school. Fortunately teachers of French are available whose interests and enthusiasm for what they are attempting to do go some way towards making up for their lack of professional knowledge and expertise.

Of more fundamental interest are the implications of this scheme for other subjects and for a wider range of pupils. As it stands our scheme is élitist in that only our most academically gifted boys are being subject to it. Experience gained so far clearly shows, however, that the gain in enthusiasm and commitment leads to remarkably few problems of comprehension. All evidence points to the feasibility of undertaking this sort of teaching with pupils of lower intellectual capacity. The examination obligations we have taken on would not be appropriate, but we are firmly of the opinion that the philosophy behind what we are trying to do is no less valid for boys and girls of less academic ability than those we are privileged to be dealing with.

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German studies for the less able

A. F. BOXFORD

As egalitarian principles of education have developed to usher in comprehensive schools so similar principles have been reflected in curriculum development. Egalitarianism must not be interpreted as either a levelling up or levelling down, the latter being a strong argument put against comprehensive education, nor as a compulsory study of similar or the same subject matter right across the ability range. It must rather be seen as departments accepting developing courses of varying subject matter and difficulty to accommodate the needs of all pupils. Teaching ability and knowledge must be shared equally among all pupils and not concentrated on examination candidates alone. Mathematicians have recognised the need and their own responsibility and have developed, for example, 'Maths for the majority'; some English teachers are working hard on courses for oral English; scientists are producing technology-biased courses for boys, courses on cosmetics for girls and any number of interesting ideas to stimulate, interest and educate the slow learner. What is the language teacher doing in this field? Has he yet accepted that he too has a responsibility for the whole ability range? Many French teachers have accepted the responsibility and have tried to teach French to everyone. Unless they are exceptional, they usually fail. They have found a need to adapt and change, just as the mathematicians and the scientists have. The result has been the European or area studies course. The mathematicians are praised for their work, and, of course, they praise themselves. Linguists, however, appear very modest and are afraid to commit themselves to the breakthrough they have achieved. Some see the European or area studies courses as a watering down of language teaching, but it would seem more positive to see such courses as a means of making excellent use of the language teacher's fund of background knowledge as well as his linguistic fluency.

The majority of German teachers are still unfortunate enough not to have realised that there are people in the world not able to pass 'O' level. German is a language reserved for the linguistically more gifted and is still almost as exclusive as Latin. Every comprehensive school tries to offer a second foreign language and this is often German. Unfortunately, only the top few per cent are still given the opportunity to learn the language. But why is German considered more difficult than French? When thinking of the slow

learner, why does German or a study of Germany not play a greater role? Surely it could be set at least equal with French in this area.

Such thoughts led some three years ago to the establishment of a German studies course as a complement to a French studies course being prepared at Rydens School in Walton-on-Thames. The initial idea was to take a class two periods per week for French, two for German and then combine in the fifth period to draw comparisons between the two countries and Britain. The grand idea resulted in a monumental failure: the *métro* turned up in every European city but Paris and the French were said to dine on *Bockwurst* and *Kartoffelsalat*, washed down with considerable quantities of beer. We thus decided to prepare parallel French and German courses and devise syllabuses for CSE Mode III approval.

The syllabus is constructed very simply with few cultural pretensions. One of its major implicit aims is to encourage pupils to think of and about an environment separate from their own but which may have as many similarities as differences. Understanding is asked for, and so the starting point of the syllabus must be the reality of pupils' lives: home, money, food and drink, entertainment, transport systems and travel, the police, the medical services and many other topics. Of course, in understanding another environment one is often led to a greater understanding and appreciation of one's own, or even to the desire to improve one's lot.

Before any of these topics can be approached the pupils must first discover that a place called Germany exists, where this place is and how to get to it. Pupils need to have an idea what German landscape looks like, what a town looks like, even what the people look like. They want to hear the German language spoken and to say one or two words themselves — note: only one or two words. Structures repel quicker than like poles in magnets. This all sounds so simple and commonplace to us, yet it is so necessary for pupils who see no further than their own home town. Even holiday trips to Majorca fail to open their eyes to the world outside.

When dealing with 'life' in Germany, one has to be extremely careful about generalisations and all-embracing comments. Resources must be provided whereby the pupils can draw their own conclusions and judgements. The major lesson for the language teacher to learn is that his normal class teaching method is of limited use with slow learners and usually at loggerheads with the aims of his course. The ringmaster approach with the pupils responding like chimpanzees at a tea party is of little use when the pupils in question have a very short concentration span or where one expects pupils to discover for themselves. Class teaching still has its place, but individual or group work around a resources bank must play a major part in teaching or learning.

Politics and culture do play a part in the course, largely in the fifth year. It is hoped that after a year's concentrated training in observation of another environment pupils will be better equipped to learn about things outside their present knowledge and understanding of their own. Modern German

history presents more than its fair share of interesting material for the pupils and the political situation can interest even the most a-political person. Berlin is a topic which needs to be understood by everyone, but it so seldom is. One can count oneself successful if one convinces pupils that Berlin is actually in the middle of the German Democratic Republic instead of on the border between the Federal Republic and the Democratic Republic. So far as culture is concerned, time is spent on a study of some of Germany's famous men as well as on looking at the Germans' attitude to cultural entertainment. It is hoped that pupils would at some time read a German author in translation, but as yet no-one has accepted the offer — perhaps not surprising considering the pupils' knowledge of and attitude to serious English authors.

As stated earlier, most pupils are interested in trying to learn the German language, particularly as they have as yet had no experience of failure in this field — in direct contrast to many pupils starting off on a French course of this type. It is imperative, however, to learn from the pupils' past experience in French and not insist on structured language and pattern drills. It is far more important for a pupil to learn how to express himself in certain situations and, even more important, to be able to understand what is said to him. Indeed aural comprehension is by far the most important skill that a pupil of this type can acquire. Reading is limited to recognition of signs and instructions, menus, etc., since they are the only things which present the ordinary traveller with any difficulty, and the only things he needs to read.

The whole point of the course is the preparation of and the working towards a visit to Germany. Without such a visit much of what has been learnt remains in a vacuum and loses its connection with reality. The visit has to be planned and carried out in such a way that pupils get the opportunity to test the validity of everything they have learnt and of the judgements they have formed. The visit to Germany is in many ways the most gratifying aspect of the whole course. One can see how the pupils' enthusiasm grows for their work, how their 'book learning' suddenly has a point. There are now visible signs that they have learnt to observe for themselves, and it is pleasing to see the expressions of delight in their eyes when they discover new things or see things they have only heard about before. The few sentences of German they have acquired are used and the desire grows to learn even more, despite, or maybe because of, the difficulties they encounter in communication.

The commitment to a CSE Mode III brings with it the problem of testing. An attempt has been made to make the course alive yet testing is so often a dull routine. Essay writing is certainly out as a major testing technique with the slow learner and the language content of the course is hardly of a type to be tested by translation, free composition or even written comprehension. The testing techniques decided upon are by no means perfect but they go some way to giving the pupils scope to display their knowledge. The following examination format was decided upon :

(a) A written paper for 1¼ hours containing a map question, multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and questions demanding

a minimum amount of information in short essay or note form. The only German required in this paper would be for recognition purposes, such as understanding a sign.

(b) A project based on the visit to Germany or some special topic chosen by a pupil.

(c) An oral in English containing questions on the project and on various aspects of the course.

(d) An oral in German comprising aural comprehension and role playing. In the written paper, it was hoped that everyone could be catered for by the different types of question: The multiple choice and short answer questions can be attempted competently by all pupils, whereas the short essays are meant to test the better candidates. The emphasis on oral testing is given since pupils express themselves more easily orally with the stimulus of an interviewer's questions than in writing.

This German studies course is presented as a broadening of scope for the German teacher, as a means of giving far greater opportunities to a greater number of pupils. It is, in my opinion, a very necessary progression in the German teacher's work and should provide greatly for the needs of many more pupils in the future. It is conceived principally as a course for the less able or the linguistically ungifted and could never claim to be complete enough to masquerade as a European studies course nor to be demanding enough for potential GCE candidates. It does, however, go some way to closing the gap in linguistically based studies in the comprehensive curriculum.

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Background studies in the Schools Council Modern Language Project

SYLVIA C. HONNOR

It is perhaps stating the obvious to point out that the four Schools Council courses: *Vperyod, Adelante, Vorwärts* and *En avant/A votre avis* are all language teaching courses. This means that whatever their subsidiary aim may be, their primary aim in every case is to teach a foreign language. Their treatment of background studies must therefore be looked at in its true context: as part of a language teaching course.

The whole situation would obviously be different if they were European studies courses. If the main aim of a course is to impart information about a foreign country and the life and culture of its people, it is certainly arguable that the whole course is best conducted in the mother tongue of the learner. If, on the other hand, the study of background constitutes only one element in a language course then what is its function in that course? Firstly it is to set the language in a context, to make it seem real. In her answer to a questionnaire about background studies sent out to pupils by the German team a senior girl said:

> 'The main problem with teaching German is that sometimes the pupil does not realise that what he or she is learning is in fact a language used by people who are quite like themselves. Unless modern examples are used the pupil finds himself unable to connect what he is learning with something that is actually being spoken by a certain part of the world. If this can be achieved the teaching of German will certainly become more interesting for the pupil.'

Secondly it can have great value as a source of motivation in language learning. This is particularly the case with older pupils for whom holidays abroad are becoming a serious and imminent possibility. They want to know what foreign countries and their inhabitants are like before deciding whether to go there. They want to feel they can cope abroad, so they need to be equipped with plenty of information as well as the necessary language to help them get by.

Most language teachers and course writers express the hope that their pupils will at some time use the language they are learning while on a visit

to its country of origin. However unrealistic this hope may still be for some pupils, it is nevertheless the aim of very many of them; in fact, in a survey of the views of 400 Edinburgh teenagers, its usefulness on a holiday abroad was by far the main reason given for learning a foreign language.

However, if background studies are to be included in course material for reasons of motivation it is important to be very careful about choosing what is to be taught so that the pupil's interest does not flag.

The third reason for including background studies in a language course is probably that most commonly quoted reason for teaching them at all i.e. the desire to broaden the children's horizons and make them more tolerant towards their European brothers. This is obviously a laudable aim and also a relevant one since it could also be one of the reasons for teaching a language.

There are almost certainly other reasons for including background studies in a language course but these three are probably the main ones as far as the Schools Council materials are concerned. Clearly then, these will have implications about *what* material is to be taught and *how* it is to be taught. Given that one aim is to broaden the pupil's horizons, then the information introduced must be wide ranging and must present new knowledge and new concepts.

Given that motivation is an aim, then the interest value of what is taught is all important, and the topics treated should be largely those that pupils either actually say they want to know about or at least probably will want to know about once they have met them.

Given that the aim is to help the teaching of language by setting it in a real life context then the sort of background information introduced will depend on the sort of language being taught. Since in the Schools Council courses the language taught is essentially practical and everyday, so the background of daily life in the modern situation must be provided in considerable detail.

Also, as the principal function of the course is to teach the language skills — speaking and writing and comprehension of language which is heard and read — then background studies must be presented in a way which also gives practice in at least one of these skills. Those which most obviously lend themselves to this are reading and listening comprehension. Because the main aims of the courses are linguistic, background studies are presented through the medium of the foreign language except occasionally at the very beginning. Of course, the teacher himself may decide to use English to give information or to explain and elaborate, but as far as the course materials are concerned, background information is presented in the foreign language from an early stage, usually either for reading comprehension practice, in pupils' books, magazines or readers, or for listening comprehension, in recorded magazine items, interviews and filmstrip commentaries. However, it is sometimes directly linked with a speaking activity. Particular examples of this are the role-playing

books in the French materials, the authentic poems and songs which are a feature of all four courses but perhaps of the Russian course especially, and the flashcards, underground map and architect's plan of a house used in Stage II of the German materials. The use of the German flash-cards illustrates very clearly the dual function of language/culture teaching materials. The flash cards have pictures of famous Germans living or dead, hence they are tools for teaching background information. They are also used for oral work and guessing games to practise such questions as 'Where were you born?', 'What did you do in life?', 'Do you like music?' etc. This sort of question and answer work is then easily transferred to include the pupil and details of his own and his parents' life.

Evidence of the use of facts about life in the foreign country as a vehicle teaching language can be found in all four courses. In the French, for example, the whole subject of the *code de la route* and road signs lends itself particularly well to the teaching, revision and practice of the modal auxiliaries *pouvoir, devoir* and *falloir*: *'Est-ce qu'on peut stationner ici?'* etc. Scenes in cafés and restaurants with relevant details about cover charges, food, specialities and tipping, are also ideal for practice of the indirect object pronouns e.g. *'Qu'est-ce que le garçon leur sert?', 'Il faut lui donner un pourboire'* etc.

These examples give a very small idea of *how* background studies are taught in the Schools Council materials. It is perhaps appropriate now to say just a little more about *what* is taught. The three main reasons for including background information in the courses at all must not be forgotten. Each can be connected loosely with particular kinds of information.

The widening of horizons is linked with the whole subject of *civilisation* but perhaps especially with what one could almost call 'Background background'. This then covers the sort of thing which is also in the background for the learner's contemporary in the foreign country. Into this category come the geographical studies of regions, the lives of famous people, writers, inventors, artists, historical figures etc.

Quite a lot of this is included in the courses, but mainly for older pupils and always helped along by a wealth of illustrations — photos, artwork and coloured filmstrips. Since this is in any case background for their foreign counterparts, many will see it as at least as far back for them too — a pleasant panorama of comparatively passing interest which need not be remembered in detail — and this is perhaps for the best, for too intense a study might eventually lead to erroneous generalisations.

Generalisations are something we want to avoid. The picture of the snail eating, beret-wearing Frenchman and the German in leather trousers are the impressions we need to dispel rather than reinforce or perpetuate. As varied a presentation of the country as possible and a closer look at a wide range of real people with a view to building up a composite picture is much more the aim.

The aspect of variety heralds a return to the question of motivation. A girl answering the German question has highlighted this rather forcibly:

> 'I think that the topics should be varied, and the topics should be mixed up, and not a lot of one topic then a lot of another etc. A little of each topic at a time.'

It is a much nearer background which is useful as an aid to motivation. It is the building up of a framework of reality by the presentation of details about today and now which is sufficiently relevant to promote the only sort of interest that makes a teenager really learn anything so that it will last. All courses contain a range of snippets of information about the colour of post boxes and how to make a phone call etc. but these are only of interest when they are related directly to the pupil. He must feel it could be useful to *him*. Several of the courses present 'A day in the life of . . .' and this can be just right or fail completely, depending on how *real* the main character is and how closely he is linked with the age and outlook of the learner.

If background studies really put the pupil in the foreign situation so that he can imagine it momentarily as *his* situation, then he will be conscious of his need for language. The more he becomes confident of his ability in the use of that language the more he will be interested in extra background information. If he feels he can talk to his foreign contemporaries he will want to know more about them and their views, and the more he then finds out the more he is likely to want to talk to them. This at any rate is the theory, and for some children at least it is also the practice which leads one inevitably to the conclusion that as far as the young language learner is concerned by far the best background is the foreground!

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A mainland viewpoint

T. SIREVAG

Looking at the subject in the light of my experience of teaching civilisation in relation to English in Norway, and of discussions over the last ten years on modern language teaching convened by the Council of Europe, I propose to concentrate on three main headings — bearing in mind the content of the other papers published in this collection.

1. *What are European studies in relation to the teaching of modern languages?*

When in the Council of Europe European studies have been the subject of discussion, opinions have been somewhat divided. Should such studies be a specific subject in school education or should the European aspect be implemented through an attitude permeating the entire school curriculum? I think I am safe in saying that the latter approach has carried the weight of opinions. When in the Council of Europe European studies in relation to modern language teaching have been dealt with, it has been on the Model which Mr James has classified as no. 5: European studies, umbrella model, under which the various language studies are grouped. But each subdivision is in fact a Model 1 course. It is language based, and though it may embrace various aspects of the life of the linguistic community, it is of necessity restricted.

To deal with European studies as a discipline based area, in my opinion and, I dare say, in the opinions of representatives of most Council of Europe countries, belongs to a conference of experts other than modern language teaching specialists.

2. *What is meant by modern language teaching within the Council of Europe?*

The guiding lines for meetings on modern language teaching under the auspices of the Council of Europe have been, in recent years, the aims agreed

upon at a meeting in Ostia in Italy in 1966 :

> 'The general aim, which is shared with the other subjects of the curriculum, is to contribute to the development of the pupil's personality, and here the study of modern languages has a vital and distinctive role to play.
>
> The specific aims are practical and cultural, and are :
>
> 1) to enable pupils to understand speech at normal speed;
> 2) to enable them to speak the language intelligibly;
> 3) to enable them to read with ease and understanding;
> 4) to enable them to express themselves in writing; and
> 5) to give them a knowledge of the foreign country and an insight into its civilisation and culture.
>
> The development of these aims should be integrated in the teaching at all levels in terms of the age, ability and interests of the pupils.'

This means that language is the basis, more or less, for teaching civilisation at all levels, and such projects as practising language through using target language textbooks in other subjects should be encouraged. This also means in educational systems where modern languages are for all pupils, that the content, the approach and the evaluation in language teaching will have to be geared to various ages, abilities and interests. Special attention has to be paid to children of less than average ability.

3. *What about 'non-specialist' language studies?*

There are various opinions about the teaching of what we in a linguistic compromise between French and English call civilisation in modern languages. I have, however, never before met representatives of such an opinion as that expressed by Mrs Richardson in her paper on non-specialist language studies. My reaction is this : There is a Norwegian saying which goes : You buy beer, but account for oats ! At this conference we hear of European studies appearing on the time table and being put on record as language teaching, as French, German and so on ! This has induced Mrs. Richardson to say : Let us be realistic and call it European studies and see what language learning comes out of it ! Anyhow, the results for languages cannot be worse ! This idea, I feel, could only have been seriously expressed in an English-speaking, or possibly a French-speaking, country ! It is totally unrealistic for countries in Europe whose vernacular languages do not carry very far and where second and even third languages are vital instruments of contact with the world outside the home country. In those countries, where the motivation for language learning is generally very strong in the whole population, civilisation studies have to be language based. May I quote the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, who in their resolution adopted on January 25, 1969, said 'that only if the study of modern European languages becomes general will full mutual understanding and co-operation be possible in Europe'.

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European studies and the study of Europe

C. V. JAMES

Several contributors have already pointed out the ambiguity of the term European studies when applied at school level, and in the introductory paper it was suggested that possibly the confusion of nomenclatures was indicative of thought that was similarly confused. Whether this is true or not, it is certainly undeniable that European studies mean very different things to different teachers, and whereas none can claim copyright it is obviously in all our interests to clarify what we do in fact mean and to agree on a common terminology. The object of this paper is to highlight some of the issues and suggest some tentative solutions and descriptors.

1 Two main factors have assumed importance in the schools in the last few years and have now begun to override all others for the language teacher, and though not basically related, they have impinged so extensively on each other that they are in danger of obscuring the true nature of the problems arising from them. The two factors are :

(i) the necessity, for social reasons, to solve the pedagogical problem of teaching foreign languages across the ability range;

(ii) the necessity, for political reasons, to solve the curricular problem of ensuring that the pupil's studies are conducted in a wider European setting than formerly they were.

The main problem engendered by the first of these demands arises from a realisation that the biggest proportion of the school population (a commonly quoted figure is 80%) lacks the motivation and/or ability to learn a foreign language beyond a certain very limited extent. A solution has been sought in the inception of 'language' courses taught in English and consisting of :

— general knowledge of the country whose language it is (becoming, at its worst, a continuous quiz show of the sort against which warnings were issued in the CSE *Examinations bulletin no. 1*, 1963);

— some rudimentary speech habits in the foreign language, providing what is quaintly termed a 'survival' knowledge (*Le cabinet n'est pas très gai* . . .).

The problem engendered by the second demand and exacerbated by British entry into the European Economic Community — the problem of the Europeanisation of the school curriculum — has led to attempts to invent or discover a new 'subject' called European studies to take a place in the timetable alongside such familiar and proven items as history and geography, and one pioneer states as a 'first principle' his 'article of faith' that a course in this subject should have a language input.

In practice, the two solutions become identical: European studies are adopted as the pedagogical solution of the social problem, and in so doing assume a role in the curriculum which leaves the political demands unsatisfied. As a language course, European studies are in fact concerned only with one country (or, in what one contributor piquantly called 'conventional courses of the Nuffield-Schools Council type', one linguistic community) and do not therefore contribute toward a broadening of the curriculum. If European studies claim a separate existence outside the other subjects in the timetable, then they become irrelevant defeating their own object. On neither count do they contribute towards a broader European orientation, nor merit the appellation European.

It is hardly surprising that the British are sometimes called insular; they do, after all, live on an island! But if the concept of Europe is to mean anything, and if European studies are to mean what they say, then the centre of the pupil's awareness must be shifted from a national to a European basis. This will hardly be achieved by setting aside a few lessons per week if for the rest of his time the pupil proceeds exactly as he has always done. To achieve such an object, in the words of our Norwegian contributor, 'the European concept must permeate the entire curriculum'.

2 The relationship between language and non-language elements in various kinds of course is determined in such circumstances according to similarly conflicting sets of criteria and results in a similar degree of imprecision of common nomenclature. Here, too, some attempt to agree on a terminology might also help to clarify thinking.

A basic element in the study of a language, arising from purely linguistic causes, is a consideration of the deeper meaning of, for example, certain lexical items (to explain the Russian *kolkhoz* as 'collective farm' is insufficient for a student to whom the concept of collectivised agriculture is unfamiliar). Such knowledge, the scope of which is dictated by the linguistic material to which the learner is exposed, might perhaps best be called *background information*.

Of a rather different order, however, is what is often known as 'background studies', comprising a more systematic study of various aspects of the society whose language is being learned. The course remains a language course, but the language is studied within the context of a consideration of the society. An appropriately unambiguous label for this non-language element might therefore be *contextual studies*.

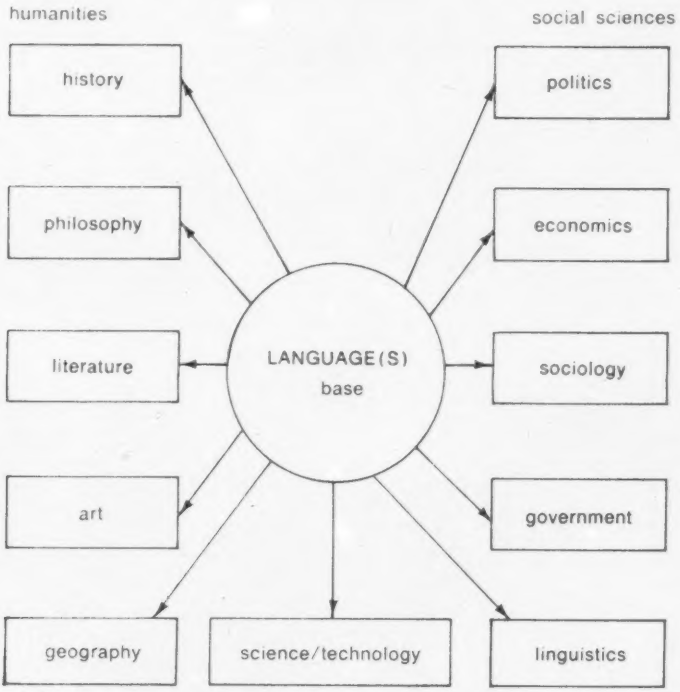
In a third stage, such a study of the society becomes the object of the course, fed by a number of subjects, one of which is language. Such courses are commonly termed *area studies*, and it is into this category that both types of course discussed above ('language' and 'European studies') will in fact fall. One structural problem, to which several contributors have drawn attention, is that of the design of the language input.

However, as the proportion of non-language content increases, two other problems become more acute — one structural and one political. They pertain both to the comparatively elementary *civilisation/Landeskunde/stranovedeniye* level of the contextual studies and to the more serious demands of the area studies, since in each case the basic principles are the same. The first concerns the need to integrate elements of different subjects into a coherent whole, avoiding the fragmentary and superficial nature of the quiz show approach. This is usually tackled by concentrating the teaching/learning around a series of 'topics', each of which is approached from several points of view. The second problem is that of preserving some degree of objectivity, avoiding, for example, both francophilia and francophobia — equally unfitting to teachers whose desire is to inform rather thar instruct and to pupils whose aim is to learn rather than be taught. It is certainly disquieting that certain teachers and administrators openly declare their objective to be the instilling into their pupils of certain 'desirable' attitudes — which to an outside observer might look very much like simply passing on prejudices, and which has some frightening implications only too visible in recent history. In fact the teacher's role is to enable the pupil to form his own attitudes, not to mould them into pre-determined shapes. In this sense the whole concept of European studies is highly dangerous and should be approached with extreme circumspection.

3 Harold Macmillan wrote of General de Gaulle that when he said Europe he in fact meant France. It is quite certain that when most of our teachers and some of our administrators say European studies they mean French studies and this is a direct result of the confusion of the two basic problems as outlined in our opening paragraph. As long as European studies are in practice an offshoot of language teaching or a replacement for language teaching to the less able pupil, it will naturally reflect the proportions of the language scene and be overwhelmingly French oriented. To many this may seem a somewhat limited vision of Europe. Indeed, it was that same General de Gaulle who spoke of Europe as stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, but the vision of the architects of European studies courses hardly extends beyond the Rhine, let alone the Oder-Neisse line. Moreover, preoccupation with the EEC excludes also the Iberian peninsula, as well as subjecting to vivisection the Scandinavian community. Such a myopic view of Europe can do nothing but harm, and this is perhaps the most powerful argument in favour of divorcing the study of Europe from the teaching of languages. In its present guise 'European studies' not only fails to propagate the concept of Europe, it impoverishes and impedes it.

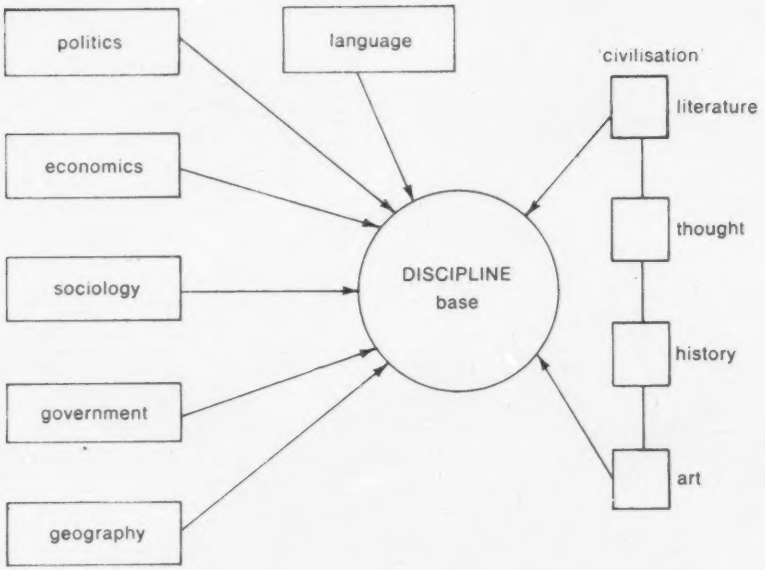
4 The school situation, still very much in a state of flux, may perhaps be illumined by a consideration of the tertiary level — universities and CNAA courses — which are subject to not dissimilar pressures. A number of types of course may be isolated :

Model 1 : Language



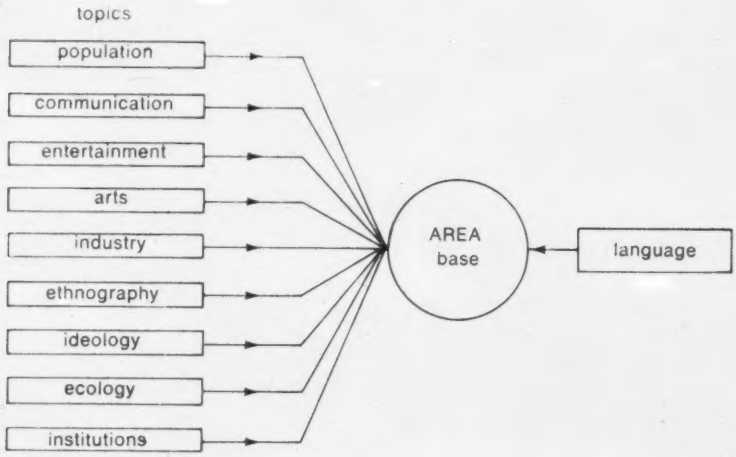
Language is the central factor of the course, providing access to all aspects of the life of the linguistic community or country by use of materials drawn from those contexts. Each aspect (or any combination) is studied in general in English, followed by a more detailed study of *one*, and a period of residence in the country, culminating in a dissertation or project in the foreign language.

Model 2 : Service courses



The organising factor is the study of social science disciplines etc., consisting of general courses in English, followed by specialisation in *one* social science. The language input is continued throughout the course and may be accompanied by a background 'civilisation' course taught largely in English. In the final year the chosen discipline is applied to a specific linguistic area and materials are used in the foreign language. A further variant intercalates a year in the foreign country, culminating in a dissertation or project in the foreign language.

Model 3 : Area studies



An area, defined in terms of one or more linguistic communities, is studied via a series of cross-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary topic-based courses, with specialised work in one or several of these as special subjects, and a language input which varies in extent according to the interests and aptitudes of the student.

All three types of course include an element of foreign language, but in each course the role of language is different :

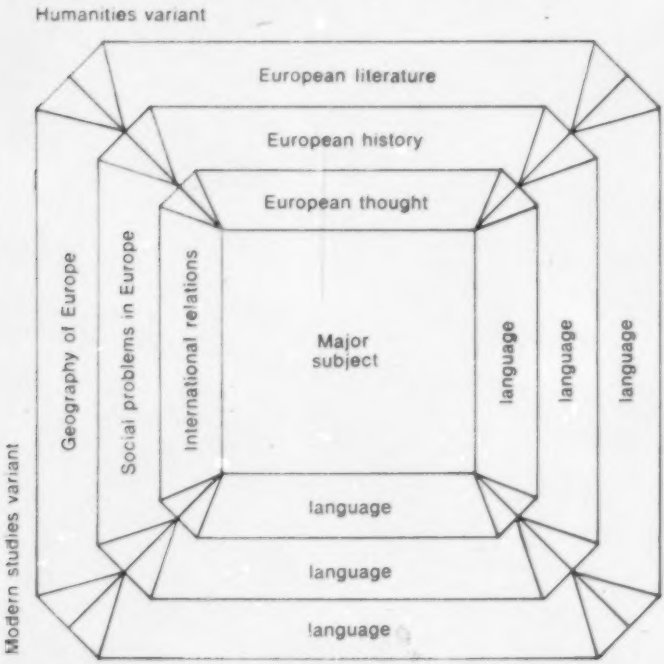
Model 1 is a language course, leading to a high standard of performance in all skills, usually with some functional training in translating, interpreting etc;

Model 2 is a course in another discipline, in which the foreign language is a tool for the expert in the field;

Model 3 considers the foreign language as an aspect of the foreign culture: the input may be quite small and limited.

Courses bearing the title European studies may also vary in structure and organisation :

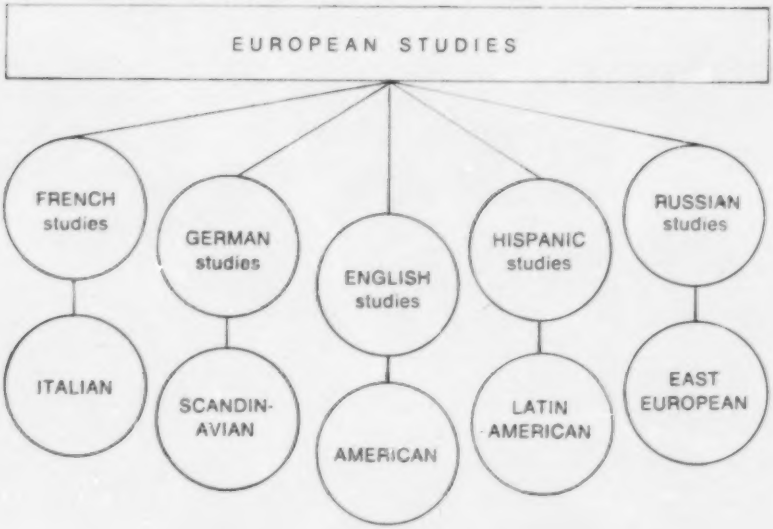
Model 4 : European studies (core/context model)



The major subject is studied within the context of courses of European literature/history/thought (Humanities variant) or European economics/sociology/geography/government (Modern studies variant). The language input is a contextual course lasting throughout the overall course. There is a year abroad, during which a dissertation is written, either in English (for major courses other than a foreign literature) or in the foreign language.

The following models concern the organisation of courses rather than their content :

Model 5 : European studies (umbrella model)

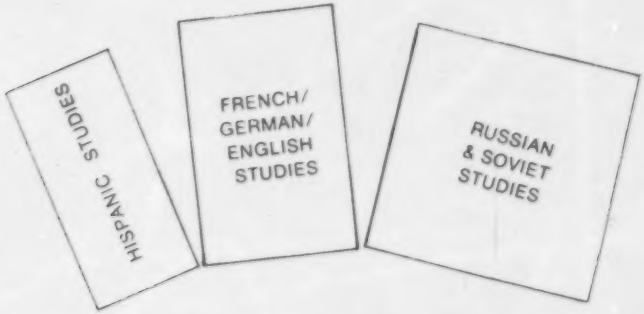


The study of Europe is sub-divided into that of a number of areas, defined in terms of linguistic communities, each of which may also include an element of a second, related linguistic community. Each component is in fact an area studies type course (Model 3). In some degree courses more than one area may be studied, sometimes with obligatory residence in one or both.

Model 6 : European studies (Cold War model)

Europe is considered to consist of two distinct parts, one of which may be studied without reference to the other. West European studies have a French/German input; East European studies have a Russian and other slavonic language input.

Model 7 : European studies (Common Market model) 1973



Western European studies are further sub-divided into EEC countries and the Iberian peninsula.

5 For the school situation, models 3 and 4 have an obvious relevance — Model 3 if European studies is to be inserted as a separate course, Model 4 if the concept of Europe is to 'permeate the curriculum'. But the implications for language teaching are very different.

Model 3 : Area studies

In these courses the definition of the area is subject to a number of possible variations in both space and time. Though at school level the time factor is rarely discussed, it can be safely supposed that the historical span with which the course is concerned is the modern, contemporary period. It should, however, be noted that the approach is equally applicable to earlier periods and that there is nothing inherent in the structure of such courses that dictates a preoccupation with the current scene.

In the courses already discussed in paragraph 1 the area is, as we have seen, a country or linguistic community — hence the inappropriateness of the title European studies as opposed to, say, French studies, German studies, or Russian studies. And since the courses tend to be designed to replace language teaching proper (Model 1) for the below average learner, the language input is degraded to the 'survival' level of a *son et lumière* phrasebook. It must be open to question whether at this level it can really be considered language teaching, and it is extremely doubtful whether it has any educational value whatsoever. None of this, however, is inherent in the design of the course, into which it is perfectly possible to insert a rigorous and demanding language component, rather more relevant to the pupil for the great proportion of the time that he spends at home than for the odd week which he may or may not pass in the company of a gang of his English-speaking fellows during a school trip abroad. If the object of the course is to deepen the pupil's understanding of a foreign culture, there are surely more intellectual demands to be put upon him than ordering his vino or locating the loo. Yet it is to such lowly considerations, more fitting to travel agent than pedagogue, that many teachers in such courses now direct their attention and time. A question that must therefore be asked is whether a language input of this type is preferable to the absence of language altogether.

Area studies, however, need not be concerned with only one linguistic community; the area involved may indeed be Europe. In this case, the only one in which the title European studies is entirely fitting, the topics will cut across national frontiers as well as subject delimitations. The language input, however, will be of a special sort. French alone will not do, but to put in courses in French, German and Russian - a minimal coverage of Europe - will hardly be possible (unless this is done on a module basis). It may therefore be thought wisest to design a course on *language* rather than of languages, on a comparative philology basis which is particularly well suited to audio-visual presentation, with recorded samples and overhead projector transparencies. Such an input would in fact be a direct parallel of the other topics, illustrating the unifying as well as dividing factors at work in Europe. Language subject

specialists could each make their contribution; it is assumed that a European studies course of this type would not be a replacement for language teaching but run in parallel with normal Model 1 language courses. Rather than attempting to teach any one language, it would give the pupil an overview of what a title such as 'the languages of Europe' might suggest.

Model 4 : Core-context

A Model 3 course of either type does, however, claim a separate existence in the timetable, with the drawbacks suggested in paragraph 1. In essence it need contribute very little to the Europeanisation of the curriculum as a whole. Of more direct assistance is the core-context concept, Model 4, when applied to all (or nearly all) the subjects in the timetable. If consideration of any historical period in any country is first made on an all-European background; if the geography of any area is first placed in an all-European context; if the art, music, literature of any nation are related to that of the others; if — in the words of the Ealing Technical College CNAA course in Modern European Studies — the pupil is enabled, even at a humble and primitive level, to sense 'the interplay of geographical, historical, economic and political factors in shaping a modern multi-national society', then he cannot but become a better and fuller citizen of the society to which, for better or worse, we now all belong, of Europe and of the world.

APPENDIX 1

*Language elements in European studies**

G. D. MORLEY

Perhaps never more than now is the case stronger for including European studies in the secondary school curriculum. Quite apart from administrative questions, this immediately raises several further educational issues: for which pupils? from what age? how will it fit into the existing curriculum? what areas should the syllabus cover and how long should it last?

Broadly European studies should provide an insight into the life and civilisation of peoples in Eastern and Western Europe; it should not therefore be confined to the study of Common Market countries. Potentially the syllabus embraces two intertwining elements: a socio-cultural component and a language component. Whilst 'socio-cultural' does not mean history or geography alone, it can incorporate aspects of these subjects together with the arts, commerce, education, politics, social questions ...

The language element is envisaged as quite distinct and independent from the established school teaching programme. Conventional 'O' level language syllabuses combine a concentration on language learning with varying degrees of background information, but in a European studies course the language component would be integrated with the socio-cultural element. Whereas ordinary language courses seek to develop general proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, for European studies the goals would be considerably more limited. However the language element should not be included solely for pupils who have shown little previous language learning ability, indeed the design below could be tailored to suit pupils of varying abilities. Far from competing with established language programmes, it would be assisted by them. Thus a class already taking 'O' level French could in the European studies French course make use of linguistically more advanced resources than would otherwise have been possible. More importantly the language element could introduce European languages which pupils might not otherwise meet at school, and thence through contrastive studies of vocabulary and structure (including reference to English) aim to induce a greater sensitivity towards language in general and English in particular. In principle a series of

*Morley, G. D.: 'Moving into Europe: studies on the Common Market'. *Times Educational Supplement*, 2 March 1973, Modern Languages Extra, p.II.

short course segments or units would be arranged in the languages for which teachers were available. The precise length of a unit would depend on the duration of the total syllabus, but as an illustration we could perhaps posit a three-year course for more able pupils consisting of five segments: four half-year foreign languages units and one whole-year general language unit.

Teachers of not only French and German, but also Italian, Russian and Spanish are already in the employ of many local education authorities; but whereas few schools have staff qualified to teach all these languages, the manpower resources are accessible and with greater deployment through peripatetic teaching could be harnessed relatively easily. Moreover most language graduates have studied a second language to a subsidiary level, e.g. Portuguese, Polish, Dutch, Norwegian ..., but rarely have the opportunity to use it after graduation. However as each language segment is self-contained, a headmaster could include a unit of Swedish or Czech without fear that the teacher might be unavailable the following year. Ideally, whatever particular languages were offered, they would include a representative from each of the major European groups: Romance, Germanic and Slavonic.

The content of each course unit needs careful consideration. They must not become mere watered-down imitations of traditional courses. Nor is the object to create intensive courses to produce fluent multilingual pupils. Teaching materials would be designed primarily to develop a reading and listening ability in specific socio-cultural areas; practice in spoken and written expression would be severely limited. This orientation reflects the belief that the restricted time available can be most practically spent training pupils in comprehension skills. Although Europeans have a better reputation than the British for learning foreign languages, it is nevertheless a fact that anybody (whatever nationality) meeting a person from another country is more likely to understand what that person says than be able to say it himself. Indeed international conference organisation sometimes assumes that delegates have a passive knowledge of the languages represented and participants are allowed to speak in their native tongue.

A further aspect of the syllabus would be the language composition of European countries, e.g. the co-existence of French, German and Romanche in Switzerland, and the distribution of French in Belgium and Luxembourg. The status of foreign languages in the different countries could also be discussed.

In the final unit pupils could usefully consider the relationships of vocabulary and of structural form between the languages. English would be an essential source of comparison, and reference might even be made (library resources permitting) to languages other than those previously taught. Here would be shown the relatedness of words in the different languages and how they have assumed various overtones. Words which English had 'borrowed' from European languages could be noted. The study of formal patterning would illustrate that for example the literal translations 'I have cold' (French), 'to me is cold' (German), and 'to me cold' (Russian) are equally viable ways of

encoding an underlying meaning. The force of case endings in one language could be compared with word order in another. The scope of gender, number, the form relationships of verb-subject and of verb-object . . . likewise offer a rich source of material on which to draw. This part of the course would demonstrate the existence and validity of other modes of expression, and thus the relationship between linguistic resources and actual form in any specific language. Leading the pupil thus to an awareness of language would broaden his outlook towards English and perhaps enable him to see himself in a fresh light.

Needless to say this kind of course would not be an easy option. The content outlined above could stretch the most able and would need to be modified considerably for use with less able pupils. But for pupils simultaneously following a conventional 'O' level language course it would provide an excellent background to the future sixth form specialist in language area studies; and for those ultimately concerned with the social sciences it would prove far more illuminating than any course taken independently of planned language units.

APPENDIX 2

A CSE Mode III French studies course

M. H. HUDSON

The following notes describe the introduction of French studies into the curriculum of Beacon School, Crowborough, and the considerations leading to the decision to establish the course.

As in many other comprehensive schools French is a compulsory subject for all pupils until the end of the third year at Beacon School. At this point pupils are able to choose (with guidance from the staff) the subjects which they would prefer to study in the fourth and fifth years. Since the majority of courses in the Upper School lead to a public examination ('O' Level or CSE), a number of would-be French students of limited linguistic ability have in the past been diverted in their own interests towards other more 'suitable' subjects. This policy has always left a sizeable group of 20-30 disappointed pupils who would have liked to continue learning French — pupils who have enjoyed learning French in the past but who for one reason or another (but most frequently because of their inability to spell correctly) have failed to achieve a satisfactory standard in the conventional aspects of language learning.

In view of this specific need it was decided that urgent consideration should be given to devising and establishing a course more suited to the requirements of these pupils. An analysis of their French examination results during the first three years in the comprehensive school indicated that many of these pupils had achieved a relatively high standard in aural comprehension but had always had low scores in the sections testing productive use of the written language. The standard of oral proficiency varied considerably from one pupil to another but most were able to cope adequately, if the range of questions was restricted to the most familiar and well practised topics. Any course which we might devise would have to take these factors into account and place a great emphasis on the particular language skills where useful progress could be expected.

One of the most encouraging results of the course used in the first three years of the comprehensive school has been the intense interest shown by the pupils in the sections dealing with life in France. Since this interest is shared equally by all pupils regardless of ability and appears to be a powerful source of motivation, a study of French life deserves serious consideration as a major

component in a new syllabus. If the language work can be closely related to the study of life in France, the result could be a balanced and stimulating course. If the link between the two major components is skillfully done, aural comprehension and oral expression can be practised in relation to realistic situations in which a visitor to France might find himself. In order to emphasise the practical nature of the course a visit to France (even a day visit) is considered essential for all pupils.

By April 1972 the first draft Mode III syllabus had been prepared and French studies was listed for the first time on the fourth-year course choice sheet. When the time came for the choices to be made, forty pupils (approximately 15% of the age group) opted for the new subject.

The detailed planning of the course continued throughout the summer term. Gradually, certain conclusions became inevitable — firstly that a formal type of examination at the end of the fifth year would be unsuitable because of the tendency towards generalising. It was felt that some form of continuous assessment would provide a more accurate reflection of each pupil's achievement. The second important conclusion was that certain areas of the work were ideally suited to inquiry-based forms of study and individualised learning. The implications of this would have to be carefully considered when resource materials were being collected and study materials being prepared.

Shortly before the end of the summer term a detailed teaching syllabus was drawn up dividing the French studies component into five parts, each of which was designed to last for one term.

Term 1 Introduction to France and comparisons with other major European countries including Britain.

Term 2 Life in France (viewed from the standpoint of the family).

Term 3 Regional study of Normandy. Some emphasis on Dieppe which will be the subject for a study visit.

Term 4 Study of a community (twin town).

Term 5 Life in France — group activities; case studies of life in contrasting regions; future trends.

The language work would be a continuous process taking specific situational themes directly related to the topics currently being studied e.g. travelling, shopping, finding one's way, etc.

The search for resource materials was now on. The course which was already in use in the school proved a valuable initial source of visual material in the form of filmstrips and illustrations from the various books and magazines. A considerable amount of useful material was found in the collections of colour slides taken on the several recent school visits to France. In order to provide for particular topics to be studied, a number of inexpensive slide sets intended for use in French primary schools were purchased, as well as some interesting slide/disc sets which we intend to adapt for aural comprehension work.

Of the British-produced books on life in France the majority suffered from the fate which seems to afflict such works — namely the tendency towards meaningless generalisation. One recently produced geography book succeeds however in presenting an up-to-date picture of France which includes much useful information on the way of life in different regions. The straightforward style in which this book is written was considered to be well suited to the ability of the French studies pupils and a class set has been bought.

The major obstacle to using French-produced books is of course the degree of linguistic difficulty presented by the text. There is, however, one series which is a noteworthy exception, published in booklet form to provide reference facilities for younger French primary school pupils engaged in project work. The series (known as the 'BTJ' and published by the Institut Coopératif de l'Ecole Moderne) would appear to offer considerable possibilities for easy adaptation as bilingual texts. Of the numerous titles available a number have been purchased to experiment with—these include *La Maison de la Radio à Paris, Si tu viens à Concarneau, le Camembert, Chez nous à Beaufort en Savoie, Un Grand Magasin*, etc.

A large amount of free publicity material has been collected much of which will serve for display purposes. A number of public services such as the SNCF, P et T and RATP publish well illustrated consumer information booklets which are ideal for adapting as teaching and/or individual study materials. Another valuable source of teaching material is the local newspaper which the school receives weekly from our twin town in France. The advertisements for example provide opportunities for studying trends in fashion, the cost of living and other topics where up-to-date information is essential.

There is no shortage of teaching materials which can be used in a French studies course. The main problem is one of discovering what exists and where it can be obtained. A number of British publishers are increasingly concentrating on this type of material, and other publishers are rapidly following their example. In spite of the considerable increase in published support materials for French studies which can shortly be expected, the need for skilfully adapted teacher-produced materials will remain.

The course at Beacon School is only in its second term but even at this early stage it is possible to make certain observations. Concentration on the oral-aural skills has considerably improved the morale of the class in language work and some competent work is now being done in the language laboratory. The French studies element has captured the interest of the pupils and has allowed them to gain confidence by having a certain measure of control over their own work. Any initial doubts that the course might become a soft option have now been dispelled. The work allows each pupil to show just how much he can achieve, when irrelevant obstacles are removed.

APPENDIX 3

Select bibliography

This short list of books and articles relevant to the topic of the Conference includes some publications referred to in the text of the report.

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APPENDIX 4

Conference participants

Conference Chairman: Miss M. C. Scott, *Joint Council of Language Associations*

Frau S. Bauer-Schlichtegroll, *German Institute, London*
A. J. Bennett, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
G. Bishop, *Bedford School, Bedford*
A. F. Boxford, *Ormonde High School, Maghull, Lancashire*
M.W.F. Brown, *Mill Hill School, London NW7*
N. C. Burgess, *Cheshire Education Department*
L. R. Cole, *West Sussex Education Department*
Dr. J. A. Corbett, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
J. F. Coulson, *Hertfordshire Education Department*
D. J. Devereux, *Association of Teachers of Italian*
Mrs. R. Doble, *Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges*
Miss A. Drury, *Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges*
Mlle G. Fontier, *French Institute, London*
W. R. Fraser, *Weymouth College of Education*
Mrs. P. Freeman, *University of Sussex*
M. Hart, *Mill Hill School, London NW7*
Mrs. S. Honnor, *Schools Council Modern Languages Project*
P. H. Hoy, HMI, *Department of Education and Science*
M. H. Hudson, *The Bacon School, Crowborough, Sussex*
S. R. Ingram, *Modern Language Association*
C. V. James, *Association of Teachers of Russian*
B. Jones, *Homerton College, Cambridge*
J. S. Jones, *Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges*
F. H. King, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
J. M. Leggott, *Gordano School, Portishead*
R. W. Lumb, *Essex Education Department*
Miss H. N. Lunt, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Mrs. D. Morcom, *Westbourne School, Ipswich*
Dr. G. D. Morley, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
J. H. Mundy, HMI, *Department of Education and Science*
E. J. Neather, *Open University*
Miss M. R. Nightingale, *The European Atlantic Movement*
L. W. Owain, *Oxfordshire Education Department*
B. G. Palmer, *Berkshire College of Education*

Mrs. B. Parr, HMI, *Department of Education and Science*
G. E. Perren, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
R. Phillipson, *English Teaching Information Centre*
G. R. Potter, *West Sussex Education Committee (Chairman, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research)*
Dr. Patricia Richardson, *Nailsea School, Bristol*
A. A. Rossi, *Hampshire Education Department*
Mrs. S. Rouve, *Philippa Fawcett College of Education, London SW16*
D. M. Rowles, *London Borough of Merton Education Department*
K. Rowley, *Forest Hill School, London SE23*
A. D. Russell, *East Sussex Education Department*
M. V. Salter, HMI, *Schools Council*
D. F. Saunders, *Brunner School, Billingham*
T. Sirevåg, *Oslo Katedralskole*
Miss I. C. Sprankling, *British Broadcasting Corporation*
J. P. Sudworth, *Association of Teachers of German*
E. Thomas, HMI, *Department of Education and Science, Welsh Education Office*
L. M. H. Timmermans, *Educational Publishers Council*
D. Utley, *Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese*
Dr. I. Vivan, *Italian Institute, London*
D. W. T. Watson, *Lancashire Education Department*
M. Webb, *Weston Park Boys' School, Southampton*
P. Whittington, *Somerset Education Department*

Conference Secretary: Miss R. White, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*

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To be published by Longman, August 1973

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